

ANTHROPOLOGY 139B: MAGIC, RELIGION, & WITCHCRAFT

60485

Wed, 7:00pm-9:50pm

SE2 1306

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the anthropological study of religion. It is not a theology course, but examines and analyzes the way religion is lived and practiced in diverse societies. The course begins with an overview of anthropological approaches and theoretical contributions to the study of religion and examines central aspects of religion like mythology, symbolism, religion, and magic. We will look at the role religion plays in human experiences of sickness, death, and uncertainty. The course ends with an examination of religious change and contemporary issues of religious conflict and violence.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Apply anthropological research methods and theoretical approaches to the analysis of religious beliefs and practices
- Assess and analyze the relationship between religious beliefs and practices and their social, economic, and political contexts



Professor Info

Angela C. Jenks, Ph.D.

Office: SBSG 3304

Phone: 949-824-3188

Email: ajenks@uci.edu

Office hours:

Wed, 4-7pm or by appt.

Course Reader

Moro, Pamela. 2013. Magic, Witchcraft, and Religion: A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion. 9th edition. McGraw Hill. ISBN: 978-0-07-803494-7

Course Website

<https://eee.uci.edu/14w/60485>

Course Requirements

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES (15% OF GRADE)

The weekly class sessions are a main source of learning for the course. Please arrive to class on time and plan to stay for the entire session.

There will be multiple activities during class sessions throughout the quarter. These may include quizzes, short reflections, film viewing guides, and other activities. No make-up or late assignments will be accepted. Missing more than one activity will have a negative effect on your grade in the class.

REFLECTIVE ESSAYS (20% OF GRADE)

Four (4) short written exercises (approximately 500 words or 1 single-spaced typed page each) will be required throughout the course. These exercises are designed to give you an opportunity to apply the concepts we are covering in class to your own experiences. Each exercise will be due on the date listed in the syllabus. More information will be available on the course website.

EXAMS (40% OF GRADE)

There will be one in-class midterm and a semi-

cumulative final exam. Exams will contain objective, short answer, and essay questions related to material covered in assigned readings, lectures, and discussion sections. You will receive a study guide one week before each exam.

Make-up exams will only be permitted in extraordinary and well-documented situations.

RITUAL ANALYSIS (20% OF GRADE)

For your final project in the course, you will observe and analyze a ritual event. Choose a religiously significant ritual event where you can participate or discreetly conduct observations and where your presence will not be inappropriate or interrupt the flow of events. You should choose an event that is *not familiar* to you.

The project will be completed in three stages:

1. **Proposal:** Write a 1-paragraph (~150 words) description of the location/event you plan to observe.

2. **Fieldnotes:** Conduct participant-observation research and write field notes either during your observation (if appropriate) or shortly afterward.

3. **Paper:** Write a 1,200 word (~4-5 pages, double-spaced) paper in which you present and analyze your data.

More information and grading rubrics will be posted to the course website.

Grading

In-Class Activities	60 pts.
Midterm Exam	80 pts.
Final Exam	80 pts.
Reflective Essays	80 pts.
Ritual Analysis	
Proposal	10 pts.
Fieldnotes	20 pts.
Paper	70 pts.
TOTAL	400 pts.

Grading Scale

A ≥ 374			A- ≥ 360		
B+ ≥ 346		B ≥ 334		B- ≥ 320	
C+ ≥ 306		C ≥ 294		C- ≥ 280	
D+ ≥ 266		D ≥ 254		D- ≥ 240	
F ≤ 240					

Course Policies

COMMUNICATION: To speak in person, come to my office hours on Wednesday afternoons or make an appointment. Outside of office hours, email (ajenks@uci.edu) is generally the best way to contact me. During the week (M-F), I will respond to messages within 24 hours.

To allow me to identify your message and respond in a timely manner, please include the name of the course in the subject line and your full name in your message.

LATE AND MAKE-UP WORK: In-class activities cannot be made up. However, you can miss one activity with no effect on your grade.

Each student has a virtual 1-day late pass that may be used for any of the reflective essays or any of the components of the ritual analysis assignment. After that pass has been used, 5 points a day will be deducted for each day the assignment is late.

GRADE APPEALS: If you believe there is a mathematical error in the calculation of your grade, please come to my office hours or send me an email.

Requests for a regrade should be submitted in writing. Please provide your original assignment and a detailed explanation of how you believe your work meets the requirements of the assignment/rubric.

HELP AND RESOURCES:

The Learning and Academic Resource Center offers several forms of academic assistance, including workshops on academic reading, exam preparation, note-taking in lectures, and study techniques.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Learning in this class depends on you completing all required assignments yourself. Violations of academic integrity (cheating, plagiarism, etc.) will result in no credit for the assignment and possible course failure and referral for disciplinary action. If you are unfamiliar with UCI's policies on academic integrity, please go to <http://www.editor.uci.edu/catalogue/appx/appx.2.htm>

The UCI Library is an excellent resource. The Anthropology Reference Librarian, Ms. Pauline Manaka, has developed a helpful online guide to Anthropology scholarship.

The UCI writing center offers in-person and online consultations for students at any stage of the writing process.

The course website includes links to any assigned readings that are not in the course reader as well as assignment information, lecture slides and handouts, and additional information about local religious sites and organizations.



Technology in the Classroom

Electronic devices are useful tools but often distract from learning. Make sure your cell phones, mp3 players, and other machines are silenced and put away during class. **Do not text or make/accept phone calls during class.** You may bring a laptop/tablet, but only to take notes or access relevant class materials like lecture slides. Do not use your laptop to explore the internet, Tweet, browse Facebook, etc. You may be asked to put your laptop away to avoid distracting other students.

Accommodations

The UCI Disability Services Center ensures access to educational programs and resources for all students. If you need an accommodation because of the impact of a disability, please contact the Center at 949-824-7494 or <http://disability.uci.edu/>.

Course Schedule and Assignments

Changes to this schedule may be made as necessary.

TOPIC	DATE	WHAT TO READ	WHAT'S DUE?
Week 1: Introduction to the Course and to the Anthropology of Religion	Wed, 1/8	--Miner, Body Ritual Among the Nacirema (online) --Chapter 1 Introduction --Geertz, Religion (online) --Lee, Religious Perspectives in Anthropology --Ruel, Christians as Believers (online)	Bring to class a list of 10 things you believe to be true
Week 2: Mythology and Symbolism	Wed, 1/15	--Chapter 2 Introduction --Beattie, Nyoro Myth, pgs. 50-54 --Narayan and Sood, Across the Seven Seas --Wolf, The Virgin of Guadalupe --Daugherty, Serpent-Handling as Sacrament --Darlington, The Ordination of a Tree	
Week 3: Ritual and Rites of Passage	Wed, 1/22	--Chapter 3 Introduction --Turner, Betwixt and Between --Myerhoff, Jewish Comes Up in You From the Roots (online) --Csordas, A Handmaid's Tale --Kapchan, Moroccan Women's Body Signs	Reflective Essay 1: Myth/Folktale Analysis Ritual analysis proposal
Week 4: Altered States of Consciousness	Wed, 1/29	--Chapter 5 Introduction --Piers Vitebsky, Shamanism --Lewis, Trance and Possession --Furst and Coe, Ritual Enemas --Harner, The Sound of Rushing Water --Hutson, The Rave	Reflective Essay 2: Rite of Passage Analysis
Week 5: Sickness, Healing, and Ethnomedicine	Wed, 2/5	--Chapter 6 Introduction --Foster, Disease Etiologies in Non-Western Medical Systems --Levi-Strauss, The Effectiveness of Symbols (online) --Fadiman, The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down --Kenyon, Zar as Modernization --Gilmore, Embers, Dust, and Ashes	
Week 6: Souls, Ghosts, and Ancestors	Wed, 2/12	--Chapter 8 Introduction --Metcalf, Death Be Not Strange --Conklin, Cannibal Epistemologies --Norget, Day of the Dead in Oaxaca --Lock, When Bodies Outlive Persons	Midterm Exam in class (7-7:50pm)
Week 7: Magic and Divination	Wed, 2/19	--Chapter 7 Introduction --Tambiah, Form and Meaning of Magical Acts (online) --Malinowski, Rational Mastery by Man (online) --Gmelch, Baseball Magic --Taussig, The Genesis of Capitalism (online)	

Course Schedule and Assignments, continued

Changes to this schedule may be made as necessary.

TOPIC	DATE	WHAT TO READ	WHAT'S DUE?
Week 8: Witchcraft and the Problem of Rationality	Wed, 2/26	--Evans-Prichard, The Notion of Witchcraft Explains Unfortunate Events (online) --Thomas, Our Families Are Killing Us --Luhmann, The Goat and the Gazelle --Brain, An Anthropological Perspective on the Witchcraze (online)	Reflective Essay 3: Magical Thinking
Week 9: Religious Change: Syncretism and Revitalization Movements	Wed, 3/5	--Mason, I Bow My Head to the Ground --Brown, Vodou --Kehoe, The Ghost Dance (online) --Worsley, Cargo Cults (online)	Reflective Essay 4: Religious Artifact
Week 10: Religious Change, cont.	Wed, 3/12	--Chapter 9 Introduction --Erzen, Religious Literacy in the Faith-Based Prison --Hoodfar, The Veil in Their Minds and on Our Heads --Juergensmeyer, Religious Terror and Global War	Ritual Analysis fieldnotes and paper due
Final Exam: Wednesday, March 19, 7-9pm			